

Did you Know?

1. Nine out of ten "Presidential Disaster

Declarations" result from natural phenomena

in which flooding is involved.

2. Eighty percent of flood deaths occur when

people drive into water or simply walk into

moving water.

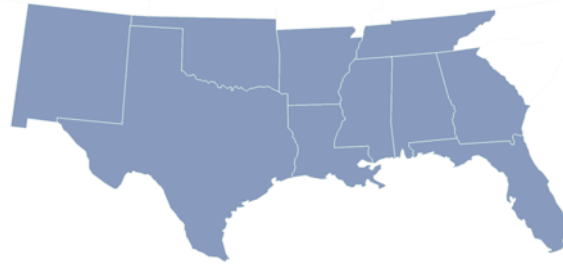
3. It only takes two feet of water to make a large

vehicle buoyant enough to lose traction and

float away.



Tropical Storm Allison Damage Photo: © Houston Chronicle



The Southern Region of the National Weather Service encompasses one-quarter of the land of the contiguous United States. This area includes ten states beginning with New Mexico and eastward across Texas, Oklahoma, Arkansas, Louisiana, Mississippi, Tennessee, Alabama, Georgia and Florida, plus the commonwealth of Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands in the eastern Caribbean.

More than 72 million people reside in this area and more than 150 million visit annually. In addition, Southern Region's coastal responsibilities include major areas of the Gulf of Mexico, the Caribbean, and portions of the Atlantic Ocean.

No region of the National Weather Service offers more meteorological challenges than the Southern Region. The Southern Region alone receives nearly 60% of all the rainfall in the USA; half of the nation's severe thunderstorm, flash flood and tornado events; and, the greatest number of tropical storm landfalls. In short, the Southern Region is home to the most active weather in the world.

www.srh.weather.gov



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Tropical Cyclones & Flooding

A call for action

to protect

your past,

your present,

your future, and

your peace of mind.



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Tropical Cyclones

Tropical cyclones threaten the United States with their torrential rains, high winds, and flooding. Even after the wind has diminished, the flooding potential of these storms remains for several days.

Tropical cyclones are products of the interaction of oceans and atmosphere. Powered by heat from the sea, they are steered by the easterly trade winds and the temperate westerlies as well as by their own ferocious energy.

Since 1970, nearly 60% of the 600 deaths due to floods associated with tropical cyclones occurred inland from the storm's landfall. In fact, more people are killed by floods than any other weather related cause. Most of these fatalities occur because people underestimate the power of moving water.

In June 2001, Tropical Storm Allison deposited up to three feet of rain near Houston, Texas during a 5-day period. This map (below) of Harris County shows the heaviest rainfall distribution. Tropical Storms, such as Allison, have winds of 39 to 73 mph and can produce as much rain and flooding as the strongest hurricanes.



Harris County Flood Control District Image

& Flooding

Tropical cyclones can, and usually do, cause several types of flooding.

Flash flooding occurs within a few minutes or hours of excessive rainfall. The rapidly rising water can reach heights of 30 feet or more and can roll boulders, rip trees from the ground, and destroy buildings and bridges.

Urban/Area floods are due to the conversion of fields or woodlands to roads and parking lots. Streets can become swift-moving rivers and basements can become death traps as they fill with water.

Coastal flooding occurs when strong winds blowing onshore, pushes water inland. Tropical cyclones cause extensive damage from storm surges when water, piled along the shore, rushes inland.

River flooding occurs when torrential rains from decaying hurricanes or tropical storms produce major river floods. River floods can occur in just a few hours and also last a week or longer.



Tropical Storm Allison Damage Photo: © Houston Chronicle

Protecting Yourself

While most floods cannot be prevented, there are simple steps you can take to protect life and property. ***This is your call for action.***

PROTECTING YOUR PAST.

Place valuables in plastic storage containers and move them to the attic or other elevated location. For jewelry and photos on your walls, have small, empty plastic storage containers nearby so you can quickly scoop up your belongings and place them in elevated locations.

PROTECTING YOUR PRESENT.

Purchase insurance through the National Flood Insurance Program. It will help you recover from a loss financially due to flooding.

PROTECTING YOUR FUTURE.

Before a flood, elevate expensive items such as outside air conditioning units. Seal vents to basements to prevent flooding. During a flood, immediately shut off your electricity at the circuit breakers.

PROTECTING YOUR PEACE OF MIND.

Learn your evacuation routes! Remember you may need to know more than one way to escape rising water. Monitor **NOAA Weather Radio** to ensure you know the latest weather developments. Avoid driving on flooded roads. Moving water is a powerful force of nature.

For more information logon at:
www.srh.weather.gov/floods

